



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/517,195

08/29/2005

Hanspeter Waser

2037.ELO

7608

35157

7590

07/01/2008

NATIONAL STARCH AND CHEMICAL COMPANY

P.O. BOX 6500

BRIDGEWATER, NJ 08807-3300

EXAMINER

EGWIM, KELECHI CHIDI

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1796

NOTIFICATION DATE

DELIVERY MODE

07/01/2008

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

patents@nstarch.com

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/517,195	Applicant(s) WASER ET AL.	
	Examiner Dr. Kelechi C. Egwim	Art Unit 1796	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 December 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 13-21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 5-12 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>07/08/2005 & 01/25/2007</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claim(s) 1-12, drawn to an additive.

Group II, claim(s) 13-21, drawn to a hydraulically setting mixture contain the additive of group I.

2. The inventions listed as Groups I-II do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: Claim 1, at least, is anticipated by or obvious over US6054022 or US6465412. Consequently, the special technical feature which links the claims, does not provide a contribution to the prior art, and unity of invention is lacking.

3. During a telephone conversation with David LeCroy on 6/18/08, a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claim 1-12.

Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action.

Claims 13-21 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37

CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

4. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Claim Objections

5. Claims 5-12 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim cannot depend from any other multiple dependent claim. See MPEP § 608.01(n). Accordingly, claims 5-12 are NOT being further treated on the merits.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

7. Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

8. The term "cellulose-like compound" in claim 1, from which the balance of the claims depend, is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The term

"cellulose-like" is not properly defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention. The scope of compounds considered among "cellulose-like" compounds is indefinite.

9. A broad range or limitation together with a narrow range or limitation that falls within the broad range or limitation (in the same claim) is considered indefinite, since the resulting claim does not clearly set forth the metes and bounds of the patent protection desired. See MPEP § 2173.05(c). Note the explanation given by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences in *Ex parte Wu*, 10 USPQ2d 2031, 2033 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1989), as to where broad language is followed by "such as" and then narrow language. The Board stated that this can render a claim indefinite by raising a question or doubt as to whether the feature introduced by such language is (a) merely exemplary of the remainder of the claim, and therefore not required, or (b) a required feature of the claims. Note also, for example, the decisions of *Ex parte Steigewald*, 131 USPQ 74 (Bd. App. 1961); *Ex parte Hall*, 83 USPQ 38 (Bd. App. 1948); and *Ex parte Hasche*, 86 USPQ 481 (Bd. App. 1949). In the present instance, claim 1, from which the balance of the claims depend, recites the broad recitation wherein the water-soluble ether of cellulose or cellulose-like compound has a viscosity of at least approximately 1,000 mPas, and the claim also recites wherein the water-soluble ether of cellulose or cellulose-like compound has a viscosity of at least approximately 2,000 mPas, which is the narrower statement of the range/limitation.

In addition, claim 3 recites the broad recitation wherein there are approximately 0.05 to 1.5 parts by weight water-soluble ether a) for approximately 1 part by weight modified polycarboxylate, and the claim also recites wherein there are approximately 0.1 to 1.0 parts by weight water-soluble ether a) for approximately 1 part by weight modified polycarboxylate, which is the narrower statement of the range/limitation.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/103

10. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Helwig et al. (USPN

6,054,022) and under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mahieu et al. (USPN 6,465,412)

In col. 5, lines 29-59, Helwig et al. teaches a composition comprising hydroxyethyl cellulose and a polycarboxylate compound.

In the abstract and col. 7, Mahieu et al. teaches a composition comprising a polysaccharide, of which cellulose is one, and a polyethylene functionalized polycarboxylate polymer.

While Helwig et al. or Mahieu et al. may not expressly teach the viscosity of the “cellulose like” compound, it is reasonable that the composition would possess the presently claimed properties, give the broad nature of applicant’s composition and given that the composition of both Helwig et al. or Mahieu et al. are essentially the same as the claimed composition. In any regard, the USPTO does not have at its disposal the tools or facilities deemed necessary to make physical determinations of the sort. In any event, an otherwise old composition is not patentable regardless of any new or unexpected properties. In re Fitzgerald et al , 619 F.2d 67, 205 USPQ 594 (CCPA 1980). See MPEP § 2112 - § 2112.02.

Even if assuming that the prior art references do not meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 102, it would still have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to arrive at the same inventive composition because the disclosure of the inventive subject matter appears within the generic disclosure of the prior art.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dr. Kelechi C. Egwim whose telephone number is (571) 272-1099. The examiner can normally be reached on M-T (7:30-6:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wu can be reached on (571) 272-1114. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Dr. Kelechi C. Egwim/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1796

KCE